

REMARKS

Applicants request that all claims be allowed in view of the amendment to the claims and the following remarks. Claims 15-44 are now pending, of which claims 15, 23, and 31 are independent.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 15-28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,058,690 (Maehiro). Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15-28 because Maehiro fails to describe or suggest all of the features recited in independent claims 15 and 23.

Claims 15-22

Independent claim 15 recites a method for enabling communications by a user having multiple identities from a single communications service that includes, among other features, displaying a single graphical user interface configured to accommodate a list for each of several identities of a user, wherein each list includes other identities with whom the user communicates using the identity to which the list corresponds.

Maehiro does not describe or suggest a single graphical user interface configured to accommodate a list for each of several identities of a user. Rather, Maehiro describes a message exchange system in which, in some implementations, a first user's deletion of a second user's handle name from the first user's friend list causes the automatic deletion of the first user's handle name from the second user's friend list. See, e.g., Maehiro at Abstract; col. 2, lines 22-44; and col. 12, line 51 to col. 14, line 23. In alternative implementations, the first user's deletion of a second user's handle name from the first user's friend list causes the second user to be notified of the deletion of the second user's handle name from the first user's friend list so that the second user can delete the first user's handle name from the second user's friend list. See, e.g., Maehiro at Abstract; col. 2, lines 22-44; and col. 12, line 51 to col. 14, line 23.

In the context of this message exchange system, Maehiro describes that a user can log in using either a master account or one of several sub-accounts. See, e.g., Maehiro at col. 10, lines 58-61; and col. 14, lines 53-61. In addition, Maehiro also presents examples of several graphical user interfaces that include friend lists associated with a user. See, e.g., Maehiro at FIGS. 6-12. Importantly, however, each example graphical user interface presented by Maehiro is for only a single account of the user and is configured to accommodate only a single friend list corresponding to the single account of the user. Accordingly, Maehiro fails to describe or suggest a single graphical user interface configured to accommodate a list for each of several identities of a user, wherein each list includes other identities with whom the user communicates using the identity to which the list corresponds, as recited in independent claim 15.

The Office Action appears to contend that FIG. 14 of Maehiro discloses a graphical user interface for two identities of a user. See Office Action of April 26, 2007 at page 2, line 24 to page 3, line 4; page 5, line 18 to page 6, line 3. However, FIG. 14 of Maehiro is not a graphical user interface as asserted by the Office Action, but rather FIG. 14 is a block diagram of a profile server system that includes a profile database. See, e.g., Maehiro at col. 6, lines 60-61; col. 14, line 62 to col. 15, line 28; and FIG. 14. Therefore, applicants submit that FIG. 14 of Maehiro fails to describe or suggest a single graphical user interface configured to accommodate a list for each of several identities of a user, wherein each list includes other identities with whom the user communicates using the identity to which the list corresponds, as recited in independent claim 15.

Because Maehiro does not describe or suggest a single graphical user interface configured to accommodate a list for each of several identities of a user, wherein each list includes other identities with whom the user communicates using the identity to which the list corresponds, it follows that Maehiro does not describe or suggest displaying a single graphical user interface configured to accommodate a list for each of several identities of a user, wherein each list includes other identities with whom the user communicates using the identity to which the list corresponds, as recited in independent claim 15. Accordingly, for at least this reason,

applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 15 and its dependent claims, claims 16-22.

Claims 23-28

Independent claim 23 recites a graphical user interface that includes, among other features, one or more window interfaces that are structured and arranged to enable a display portion configured to make perceivable multiple identities of a user from a single electronic communication service, and to make perceivable one or more buddy lists that each have one or more constituent buddies and that each are associated with one of the multiple identities of the user. As discussed above in connection with independent claim 15, Maehiro fails to describe or suggest such a graphical user interface. Accordingly, for at least this reason, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 23 and its dependent claims 24-28.

New Claims

Claims 29 and 30

Each of new claims 29 and 30 depend directly from independent claim 15. Therefore, because of their dependencies and for at least the reasons discussed above in connection with independent claim 15, applicants submit that new claims 29 and 30 are allowable over the prior art of record, namely Maehiro.

Claims 31-44

New independent claim 31 recites a method for linking multiple identities of a user from a single communications service. Among other features, the method includes creating an association between a first identity of a user and a second identity of the user such that, in response to authentication of both the first identity of the user and the second identity of the user, the association between the first identity of the user and the second identity of the user triggers

display of a single graphical user interface for both the first identity of the user and the second identity of the user that is configured to accommodate the first buddy list corresponding to the first identity of the user and the second buddy list corresponding to the second identity of the user.

As discussed above in connection with independent claim 15, Maehiro does not describe or suggest a single graphical user interface for both the first identity of the user and the second identity of the user that is configured to accommodate the first buddy list corresponding to the first identity of the user and the second buddy list corresponding to the second identity of the user. Therefore, it follows that Maehiro does not describe or suggest creating an association between a first identity of a user and a second identity of the user such that, in response to authentication of both the first identity of the user and the second identity of the user, the association between the first identity of the user and the second identity of the user triggers display of a single graphical user interface for both the first identity of the user and the second identity of the user that is configured to accommodate the first buddy list corresponding to the first identity of the user and the second buddy list corresponding to the second identity of the user, as recited in new independent claim 31. Accordingly, for at least this reason, applicants submit that new independent claim 31 and its dependent claims, claims 32-44, are allowable over Maehiro.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the

Applicant : Heather Allison Schlegel et al.
Serial No. : 10/715,213
Filed : November 18, 2003
Page : 13 of 13

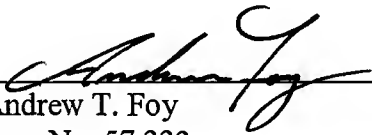
Attorney's Docket No.: 06975-
380001 / Communications 83

amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

The fee in the amount of \$100 in payment of the Excess Claim Fee is being paid concurrently herewith on the Electronic Filing System (EFS) by way of Deposit Account authorization. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 26, 2007



Andrew T. Foy
Reg. No. 57,333

Fish & Richardson P.C.
1425 K Street, N.W.
11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3500
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (202) 783-2331

40433504.doc